



**HAGLEY CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**
SEMPER FIDELIS

Anti-Bullying Policy

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Bullying defined at Hagley Catholic High School

Bullying is behaviour conducted by either one individual, or a group of individuals, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is believed that bullying involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim – this power imbalance can manifest itself in a number of ways, e.g. physically, psychologically, intellectually or socially.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice towards particular groups on grounds that include, but are not limited to, race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. It might be motivated by actual differences between students, or perceived differences.

A child may also be bullied as a result of vulnerable characteristics, such as because he/she is adopted or has caring responsibilities. We also recognise the huge impact that cyber bullying has on the lives of our young people, as the bullying behaviours are now even more pervasive.

There is a difference between relationship breakdowns and bullying; children should expect to fall out with their friends as this is a normal part of maturation. However, we acknowledge that where there is a perception of damage then we will take all allegations of bullying seriously and investigate as necessary.

To enable students to navigate this differentiation, we promote the S.T.O.P approach. If the behaviour has occurred Several Times On Purpose, we would investigate this as an incident of bullying.

Students perceive bullying to occur between 'popular' students and students who display any kind of difference. At Hagley we aim to expose and challenge this narrative by encouraging everyone to report bullying. We will identify and reward behaviours which are conducive to challenging and changing this narrative.

Legislative Links and Statutory implications

The school understands that, under the [Human Rights Act \(HRA\) 1998](#), it could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

The school understands that, under the [Equality Act 2010](#), it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the [Malicious Communications Act 1988](#), it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a

threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

- The [Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#) makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the [Communications Act 2003](#) makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

This policy and protocol also relates to the:

- [Children Act 1989](#) – legislates for bullying incidents to be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause.
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) – requires schools to have measures to promote good behaviour and prevent bullying amongst students . This act also gives schools the power to discipline students as a result of their conduct off the school premises.
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) – requires schools to have an anti-bullying strategy in place.
- [Public Order Act 1986](#);

Staff Responsibility

- Every staff member has a responsibility to identify, prevent, intervene and contribute to the repair of all bullying and consequences of bullying. They should be aware of all protocols surrounding this, which contribute to the ethos of school life.
- Staff should be aware of the impact of bullying upon different groups of students and treat them accordingly, through vigilance and be prepared to adapt their approach to these students to enable them to access the support they need. Staff will receive regular CPD, updating them on types of bullying, in house statistics and the procedure for identifying and managing bullying behaviours.
- It is essential that staff understand there should be no bias when dealing with victims and perpetrators and that being a perpetrator of bullying could be a behavioural trigger that demonstrates more complex issues that implicate safeguarding/SEN.
- Staff will record bullying incidents through Arbor. It is expected the staff involved will also liaise with the relevant Head of Year in the first instance.
- Where bullying occurs towards staff, the school community should understand that bullying, whether by students , parents or colleagues, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This should be reported to the Principal who will initiate an investigation. Please see the Whistleblowing Policy for further information.
- Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:
 - Being frightened to travel to or from school
 - Asking to be driven to school
 - Unwillingness to attend school
 - Truancy

- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person is likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed

Dealing with Bullying

The staff will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision and unpleasantness between students is always challenged and never ignored.

- Staff always respect students ' privacy, and information about specific instances of bullying are not discussed with others, unless it is in a setting that the victim has given consent to, or there is a safeguarding concern.
- In the first instance, restoration is key. Victims will get the opportunity to face the perpetrators and explain how they have made them feel. The perpetrators will also get the opportunity to explain their actions. Where possible, there will be an agreement about the next steps in repairing the damage caused.
- Parents will be informed and regularly communicated with about the process.
- Where necessary, punitive sanctions will be applied. School will support a range of options as they are appropriate to the context. In extreme cases, the severest sanctions will be applied.
- See the Behaviour Policy for further options on punitive sanctions. However, disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any SEND that students may have, as well as any vulnerabilities.
- All students who are found to be perpetrators of bullying will have to undergo a programme of restoration that involves further education around bullying behaviours and the subsequent consequences.

- As a school, we will regularly carry out bullying awareness activities through assemblies and can also deliver bespoke anti-bullying work with individuals and small groups.
- We will seek help from external resources or organisations to assist with dealing with specific problems.
- Investigations into bullying will be led by the HOY, supported by SLT and the DSL team where necessary.
- Where long-lasting effects of bullying occur that cause an individual to have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than others of the same age, schools will consider whether a SEN assessment would be beneficial.
- We will ensure we make appropriate provision for a student's short-term needs, and clearly set out the actions we will take when bullying has had a serious impact on a student's ability to learn.
- Where the effects of bullying are so severe that it is not possible to reintegrate a student back into school, we will make other arrangements to ensure their learning remains uninterrupted. This may involve transferring the student to another school, or other alternative provision.
- A safe place, supervised by a member of the teaching staff, is available for students to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone (The Hub)
- Before a vulnerable student joins the school, the student's form teacher and the DSL will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening – this will include giving the student a buddy to help integrate them into the school.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.
- Staff will be made aware of potential victims and current victims of bullying to enable this information to support lesson planning and seating plans.
- The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered, this includes contacting the parents where doing so will not cause further harm. The police will also be contacted.
- Staff members (usually the form tutor) will be assigned to monitor both victims and perpetrators of bullying for an agreed amount of time to ensure appropriate support is provided, for as long as is needed.
- We will ensure that the victims and their families are clear about what action has been taken to avoid the misconception that 'nothing gets done'. This misnomer has been found to deter students from reporting bullying in the first place.

Bullying outside of school

- The Principal has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. [Section 89\(5\) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) gives the headteacher the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

- Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Mental Health

- The school recognises that bullying (in all its forms) may have a detrimental effect on the mental health of victims and will take this into consideration when offering support.
- The school also recognises that being a perpetrator of bullying may be an indication of poor mental health and will take this into consideration when offering support.

Students

- We aim to make it easy for students to report incidents, whether they occur inside or outside of school. By creating an inclusive atmosphere, supported by our Catholic ethos, students should feel unafraid and confident to discuss bullying without fear of further recriminations. We offer a specific email address – saferefuge@hagleyrc.worcs.sch.uk – where incidents can be reported at any time. The relationships between adults and students at the school should be such that students can report any incidents to whomever they feel comfortable talking to.

Cyber bullying:

Increasing access to technology has provided a new medium for ‘virtual bullying’ which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying has the potential for a wider audience so more people can view the activity, which may be conducted via text message, gaming or social media.

- Individual cases of cyber bullying will be advised upon in accordance with our IT support team, owing to the myriad of platforms that can host bullying behaviour. Ultimately, if the perpetrators are Hagley students, then the same process of restorative justice applies. Parents will be informed and called in for a meeting in order to facilitate this.
- Where our students are victims of anonymous cyber bullying, we will advise parents to block all accounts and inform the police.
- If authorisation has been given by the Principal and there is reason to believe a student is being cyber bullied, schools are able to seize an electronic device to examine data or files and delete these.
- Where the bullying involves inappropriate images, adults are required not to look at them but to seize the device, turn it off/switch to aeroplane mode and pass the device to the DSL/Principal.
- The school will continue to advise and update parents/carers about the dangers of specific apps and platforms (see the school website for more details)

Accountability

- Bullying incidents will be periodically reported to governors.
- Any trends in bullying incidents will be periodically identified by the Assistant Principal for Inclusion and discussed at PLT, where strategies will be explored and agreed upon.
- We will regularly evaluate and update our anti-bullying approach, accounting for developments in technology.